INTERESTING POLITICAL HISTORY.

The Presidents and their Cabinets.

INTRIGUES OF POLITICIANS.

The formation of a new administration, by the appointment of the cabinet, or great officers of state, is always an interesting period of political history. In the HERALD of the 10th March, soon after the formation of President Pierce's cabinet, we gave full lists of the names of members of cabinets under the various administrations of our national government, from that of General Washington, in 1789, to the present time. We also noticed the circumstances which caused the difficulties in the cabinets of Washington and John Adams, and the impressions which the personal character and qualifications of the successive Presidents made upon the government and officers of the country during the period of their administrations. It will, we think, be interesting to give some account of the formation and dissolution of cabinets, and the intrigues of politicians connected therewith.

Passing over the administrations of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and John Quincy Adams—under which, with a few exceptions in the case of Madison, the cabinet members generally coincided in feeling with the respective Presidents, and co-operated with them—as possessing few points of interest at this time, we come to the memorable administration of Andrew Jackson, which commenced in March, 1829, and continued through a period of eight years. Jackson, who may be called the "last of the cocked hats," was also the last President who was re-elected.

Great expectations were formed that a brilliant and talented cabinet would be selected by General Jackson, after his triumphant election, by a large popular majority, over Mr. Adams—and some disappointment was expressed that he had failed to choose the strongest men from among the leaders of the party which had elevated him to the Presidency. In consequence of the death of De Witt Clinton, a few months previous to the election of President, in 1828, it was generally conceded that Martin Van Buren, who succeeded Mr. Clinton as Governor of New York, and on whom the Jackson party united in this State, occupied the most prominent position of any of the democratic leaders for a seat in the cabinet. He was, therefore, made Secretary of State. As to the Treasury Department, much difference of opinion prevailed, and various candidates for Secretary were recommended to the President. Jackson himself preferred the late Henry Baldwin, of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, (afterwards Judge of the United States Supreme Court,) and on his way from Tennessee to Washington invited Baldwin to accompany him, with the assurance of his being placed at the head of the Treasury. But there was at that time in Pennsylvania a powerful clique of democratic leaders who were devoted to the interests of Vice President Calhoun, and not originally Jackson men. A large proportion of the Pennsylvania delegation in Congress were of this Calhoun clique and determined to prevent the appointment of Baldwin, who was an original friend of Gen. Jackson. They therefore brought forward, as their choice for Secretary of the Treasury, Samuel D. Ingham, one of their own clique, and a member of Congress from Bucks county. As thirteen of the twenty Jackson members of Congress from Pennsylvania were in favor of the appointment of Mr. Ingham, and represented to the President that he was the choice of Pennsylvania, Gen. Jackson reluctantly gave up his own choice, and appointed Mr. Ingham. A few months afterwards he placed his friend Baldwin on the bench of the Supreme Court.

For Secretary of War, Gen. Jackson selected Major John H. Eaton, who at that time was one of the United States Senators from Tennessee, and had held a seat in that body for more than ten years. He was the particular friend and biographer of Gen. Jackson. When invited by the President to become a member of the cabinet, he desired to be excused, and only gave up his objections at the pressing solicitations of Jackson. Mr. Desha, a member of Congress from Tennessee, in a letter to Duff Green, published in the summer of 1831, says:—"I was one of General Jackson's original, warm, personal, and political friends, who have been denounced for no other reason, as I believe, but that I could not say Major Eaton was one of the greatest men in the nation, and that Mrs. Eaton was a slandered woman. I was in the city when it was rumored that Major Eaton would be appointed in the cabinet, (a few days before the General was inaugurated.) I waited on the President, and gave him my opinion, honestly, that it would be an unfortunate appointment; that I could see disappointment and mortification in the countenances of his friends; that the country expected him to select men for his cabinet of the first talent in the nation; that Major Eaton was not one of that description. The President's answer was, that Mr. Eaton was a talented man, and that he was well informed that it would be a very popular appointment in New York and Pennsylvania."

John Branch, of North Carolina, was selected by the President as Secretary of the Navy. He was one of the United States Senators from his native State, and it seems he was partly indebted to the influence of Major Eaton for his appointment to the Navy Department. In an address to the public, in September, 1831, published after the dissolution of the cabinet, Major Eaton says:—"Mr. Branch and myself were born and reared in the same county of North Carolina, educated at the same college, and had been associates and friends in early and advanced life. I solicited his appointment as a member of the cabinet, and at the President's request informed him of the selection. He made no objection—not the least, save on the score of a modest distrust of his competency, and expressed at the time much gratitude towards the President, and exhibited much good feeling towards myself."

William T. Barry, of Kentucky, who was appointed Postmaster General, was a zealous friend of General Jackson, and had made a strong run for Governor of Kentucky, at the August election, in 1828, although unsuccessful. Major Eaton says:—"Mr. Barry was appointed, from the confidence reposed in him by the President, derived from his personal knowledge of his worth and merits. Between Mr. Van Buren, Mr. Barry, and myself, the most cordial friendship has always subsisted; nothing has ever arisen to interrupt in the least our friendly relations."

The same gentleman further remarks:—"I met all the members of the cabinet as friends, personal and political, to whom was assigned the highest destiny, by harmony of feeling among themselves, of giving unity of design and vigor of action to the administration of General Jackson. In the same light, I am sure, did he consider us. In the singleness of his heart and the ardor of his patriotism, he suspected not that there was amongst us any other object than by our cordial support to enable him in the cabinet, as he had done in the field, 'to fill the measure of his country's glory.' Far otherwise were the feelings of Messrs. Ingham, Branch, and Berrien."

John McPherson Berrien, whom Gen. Jackson appointed Attorney General, was one of the United States Senators from Georgia. He had been unanimously elected to the Senate in Nov. 1824, by the friends of Mr. Crawford, who were predominant in the Legislature of Georgia. He was, therefore, supposed to be a Crawford man, of the same school as Mr. Van Buren; but when in the cabinet, he seems to have indicated a preference for Mr. Calhoun over Mr. Van Buren, as the successor of General Jackson, although he says he endeavored to inculcate the propriety of abstaining from all agitation of that question. Major Eaton says—"With Mr. Berrien I had been on terms of intimacy, and supposing him to be a man of talents and honor, was pleased that he was selected. The President requested me to confer with him in relation to his acceptance. At that time we were in habits of the kindest intercourse. He seemed highly flattered by this manifestation of the President's confidence, and offered no objection to an acceptance, except intimating a possible interference with his private business."

Mr. Berrien, in an address to the public, says: "The annunciation of the names of the intended cabinet seemed to me to present an insuperable bar to my acceptance of the office which was tendered to me. I thought I foresaw clearly the evils which have too obviously resulted from the selection. A gentleman, high in the confidence of the President, whom he consulted, expressed his decided conviction, founded on a long and intimate knowledge of the President's character, that he would himself speedily see and correct the evil. I yielded to those suggestions, and took my seat in the cabinet." Mr. Berrien was the only member of this cabinet who turned whig after its rupture. He became an influential leader of the opposition to Jackson and Van Buren, and was elected to the U. S. Senate by the whig Legislature of Georgia, in 1840.

There is no evidence that Mr. Van Buren had any hand in the formation of the cabinet. He had been elected Governor of New York in November, 1828, and after the 1st of January, 1829, remained at Albany to fulfil the duties of Governor for a brief period, before he resigned that office, on the 12th of March. It should be remarked, that the Jackson party of 1828, which had elected Gen. Jackson President and Mr. Calhoun Vice President, was composed of heterogeneous materials; namely, of the original supporters of Jackson in 1824, of the friends of Calhoun, of those who had supported Crawford, and a few of those who had gone for Clay, but now preferred Jackson to Adams; also, of the dissatisfied Adams and Clay men, who deserted the administration, for the support of Jackson, in 1828. It was necessary, for the purpose of harmony and conciliation, to select the members of the cabinet and other principal public officers from the different sections of the party. Accordingly, in the cabinet, the Crawford men were represented by Van Buren and Berrien, the original Jackson men by Eaton and Barry, and the Calhoun men by Ingham and Branch. It soon became evident that the cabinet was divided thus:—Messrs. Ingham, Branch and Berrien as the friends of Vice President Calhoun, and Messrs. Van Buren, Eaton, and Barry as his opponents. It was, however, the general public impression that the influence of Mr. Calhoun was preponderant at Washington. His friend, Gen. Duff Green, who was then public printer and editor of the *Telegraph*, the government organ, was the constant adviser of the President, whose early appointments of individuals to public office were considered decidedly adverse to the wishes and interests of Van Buren, and favorable to those of Calhoun. The star of the Vice President was deemed to be in the ascendant; and it was generally believed that the influence of the President would be exerted to promote his elevation to the Presidency upon his own retirement, which was then understood would take place at the end of the term of four years—Gen. Jackson having, during the Presidential canvass, expressed himself in favor of the one term principle, and adverse to a re-election of President. Public expectation, with regard to Mr. Calhoun's prospects, was not, however, destined to be realized.

While the patronage of the executive was so directed publicly to strengthen Mr. Calhoun's party, by placing many of his friends in important posts, the ground on which he stood was crumbling beneath him, and measures were in train to create a breach between him and the President. To Mr. Calhoun, as a more early and efficient supporter, the President had given a greater share of confidence, and manifested a warmer feeling, than he had originally bestowed upon the Secrerary of State, Mr. Van Buren. In this particular the Secretary labored under a disadvantage; but circumstances soon enabled him to obtain a great superiority of influence over the mind of the President. Major Eaton informs us that, "the moment Mr. Van Buren was appointed Secretary of State, jealousy and fear arose, and then the desire was to place around the President as many of Mr. Calhoun's friends as possible, to counteract the apprehended and dreaded influence, a part of which I most gratuitously was supposed to be. Devoted as I was said to be to Gen. Jackson and the success of his administration, my appointment was calculated rather to thwart than to promote their ulterior designs. It was deemed necessary to prevent it; but if that could not be effected, then adequate means were to be resorted to to get me out of the way. Months had rolled away, and as yet the President had never seen and corrected the evil, as was expected. Mr. Van Buren, it was feared, had gained, and was gaining so fast upon my esteem, that serious apprehensions were entertained that I should fall within the vortex of his influence. In addition, it was imagined, or rather feared, that General Jackson might consent to a re-election, and reasons were discerned why Van Buren would desire it as a matter of interest to him, and how, through my influence, the matter might succeed, and the claims of Mr. Calhoun be deferred, his prospects injured, and he be driven into retirement. The malign influence must be removed, and to accomplish it, I was to retire, not only from the cabinet, but from Washington. The Secretary of War was not qualified for the duties of the War Department, yet he might be sent to represent his country at one of the most important courts of Europe. [Gen. Green had proposed, it was said, that Major Eaton should accept the mission to Russia, as an honorable exchange for the War Department.] He (the Secretary) and his family were not fit and good society for the families of such pure honorables as Ingham, Branch, and Berrien, and yet they were to be considered 'good society' enough for one of the first and most powerful monarchies of Europe."

Major Eaton had, in January, 1829, married the widow of Mr. Timberlake, a purser in the navy. This lady's maiden name was O'Neal, of a family residing in Washington city. Although an elegant and fascinating woman, the ladies of the most fashionable society of Washington, on account of some supposed irregularities, before she was the wife of Timberlake, had refused to admit Mrs. Eaton as a member of their social circle. Mrs. Calhoun, Mrs. Ingham, Mrs. Branch, and Mrs. Berrien, in conformity to what was deemed the public opinion of female society in Washington, refused to associate with Mrs. Eaton, or to visit her, or invite her to their parties. Major Eaton, in his statement before referred to, says:—"I never complained of any one for not associating with me or my family. To see my house filled with unwilling or reluctant visiters, constrained to call by the command of power, could never be desired by me. Happily, I was never dependent on such authority for friends, associates and visiters. Always, when my doors were open, at large parties and at social calls, I met friends who evinced, by their frank and open demeanor, that they came of their own volition, and not through hope of reward or fear of punishment. It is true I did not meet some of my colleagues, or their families, nor some of their associates of the same political stamp, but I met ladies and gentlemen quite as respectable and equally as agreeable. If, as is true, I and my family were not invited to the houses of Messrs. Ingham, Branch and Berrien, so neither were they invited to mine, and in this we were equal; and neither, as I conceived, had a right to complain."

As President Jackson warmly sympathized in the feelings and resentment of the Secretary of War in the matters affecting the domestic relations of the latter, which we have referred to, the Secretaries of the Treasury and Navy, and Attorney General, as the objects of that resentment, gradually lost his confidence, which was transferred to the Secretary of State, whose course, both in public and private, had so completely harmonized with the wishes of himself and his friends. Being a widower, Mr. Van Buren was not bound to take any part in the controversy respecting the domestic relations of the Secretary of War, and, of course, kept aloof from it. Mr. Branch, in his statement, however, remarks—"Mr. Van Buren had become latterly the almost sole confidant and adviser of the President. How he obtained this influence might be a subject of curious and entertaining inquiry: but I shall not pursue it. I may add, however, that amongst the means employed wer the most devoted and assiduous attention to Mrs. Eaton, and unceasing efforts to bring her into notice, especially with the families of foreign ministers." Mr. Branch also says:—"From the moment of Major Eaton's appointment, General Jackson began to use his utmost efforts to bring Mrs. Eaton into public favor and distinction. He frequently spoke of the neglect Mrs. Eaton received when she attempted to appear at public places. He did not fail to intimate that it would be a most acceptable service rendered him if the members of his cabinet would aid in promoting this object. I felt greatly embarrassed by such appeals to myself. It was impossible for me to comply with his wishes on this point. In any other matter in which I could, with a proper respect for myself and the feelings of my family, have complied with an intimation of this desire, no one would have done so more cheerfully than myself. By way of diverting his mind, I several times spoke of the difficulty he would experience in attempting to regulate the intercourse of the ladies; that they were, in matters of that kind, uncontrollable and omnipotent; that he would find less difficulty in fighting over again the battle of New Orleans. Finally, when the President found that his efforts to introduce Mrs. Eaton into society proved abortive, he became every day less communicative, and more formal in his hospitalities, until there could be no doubt that, as to myself, an unfriendly influence had obtained an ascendancy in his private councils."

The difficulties in the cabinet continued for about two years, when, on the 20th of April, 1831, the public was astonished by the information, promulgated through the official journal at Washington, that the members of the cabinet had resigned, and the most lively curiosity was manifested to learn the causes of this unexpected movement. The letters of the several members of the cabinet were published; but they served rather to inflame than to gratify the public feeling. The Secretary of War, Mr. Eaton, first resigned, without assigning any reason, on the 7th of April, and he was followed by the Secretary of State, Mr. Van Buren, on the 11th of April, who assigned as a reason, that circumstances beyond his control had presented him before the public as a candidate for the succession to the Presidency, and that the injurious effects necessarily resulting from a cabinet minister's holding that relation to the country, had left him only the alternative of retiring from the administration, or of submitting to a self-disfranchisement hardly reconcileable with propriety or self-respect. This was considered a curious reason, as Mr. Van Buren had not been formally nominated as a candidate, and men's thoughts had scarcely wandered beyond the election of 1832, to that of 1836.

Messrs. Ingham and Branch, having each received intimations of a wish on the part of the President that they should resign, as heads of the Treasury and Navy Departments, their resignations were forthwith made, and accepted by the President, in formal letters, expressive of his satisfaction with their official conduct, and stating his motive for requiring their resignation. This was, to use his own words, that having concluded to accept the resignations of the Secretaries of State and of War, he had come to the conviction that he must entirely renew his cabinet. "Its members had been invited by me," he remarked, "to the stations they occupied. It had come together in great harmony, and as a unit. Under the circumstances in which I found myself, I could not but perceive the propriety of selecting a cabinet composed of entirely new materials, as being calculated, in this respect at least, to command public confidence, and satisfy public opinion."

The intimation of his intention to reorganize his cabinet was also considered to extend to the Attorney General, Mr. Berrien, who was then on a visit to Georgia. His resignation was accordingly tendered and accepted, upon his return to the seat of government, on the 15th of June. The cabinet had been partially reorganized, about a month previous, by the appointment of the Secretaries of State and of the Navy. The arrangements, however, were not finally completed until after the resignation of the Attorney General, it being arranged that the Postmaster General, Mr. Barry, who had not apparently been connected with the difficulties in the cabinet, should remain in office. He accordingly continued a member of the cabinet until 1835, when he resigned, and was succeeded by Amos Kendall. Mr. Barry was at the same time appointed Minister to Spain, and died in England, in August, 1835.

In the meantime, a misunderstanding had occurred between the President and Vice-President, which continued to increase until it ended in an open rupture. The quarrel originated in the view taken by Mr. Calhoun, in 1819, when Secretary of War, of the conduct of General Jackson during the Seminole campaign. In the discussions which took place in Mr. Monroe's cabinet, Mr. Calhoun proposed that a court of inquiry should be held on General Jackson's conduct, inasmuch as he had transcended his orders. Mr. Crawford, then Secretary of the Treasury, also advocated a course which would have been a censure on General Jackson. The Secretary of State, Mr. Adams, vindicated the course of the General, who was also sustained by President Monroe, and all proceedings against him were relinquished, government determining to justify his conduct in the military operations referred to.

In May, 1830, a letter from Mr. Crawford to Mr. Forsyth was placed in the hands of General Jackson by the agency of a particular friend of Mr. Van Buren, then at Washington, accusing Mr. Calhoun of having proposed a censure upon him for his conduct in the Seminole campaign above mentioned. This letter was transmitted to Vice-President Calhoun by the President, with an intimation that it was so contrary to his impressions of the course he had supposed Mr. Calhoun to have pursued as to require some explanation. Mr. Calhoun replied, and showed, by referring to the correspondence between General Jackson and the government, in 1818, that he had a right to conclude that the General knew Mr. Calhoun's opinion to be that he had transcended his orders, and that his vindication had then been placed on other and distinct grounds. Mr. Calhoun then proceeded to inquire into the motives which had led, at this late period, to a renewal of this discussion, and avowed his belief that it had originated in a desire to detract from his influence with the President, and thus to destroy his political standing with the friends of the administration. A long and protracted correspondence ensued, in which Mr. Crawford, and several of his confidential friends, took part; and, although Mr. Van Buren disclaimed all knowledge of the preliminary movements which had led to this disclosure and correspondence, still the respective claims of Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Van Buren upon the succession to General Jackson, and the political relations of the agents who appeared as the prime movers in this affair, produced a general impression, particularly among the friends of Calhoun, that its sole object was to create a breach between the President and Vice President, with the view of destroying the prospects of the latter as a rival candidate for the Presidency. If such was the object, it was effected by the correspondence between Gen. Jackson and Mr. Calhoun; and, in February, 1831, it was published by the latter, with an address to the people of the United States, stating the painful circumstances and reluctance under which he came before the public.

"The origin," he says, "goes far back beyond the date of the present correspondence, and had for its object, not the advantage of Gen. Jackson, but my political destruction, with motives which I leave you (the public) to interpret. The enmity of Mr. Crawford to me, growing out of political controversies long since passed, afforded a ready and powerful instrument by which to operate; and it was early directed against me, with the view of placing Gen. Jackson and myself in our present relations. With that motive, in the midst of the severe political struggle which ended in elevating him to the Presidential chair, and in which I took a part so early and decidedly in his favor, a correspondence was opened at Nashville, unknown to, and unexpected by me, in December, 1827, which commenced that chain of artfu operations that has terminated by involving General Jackson and myself in the present correspondence. A copy of the letter which opened this operation has been placed in my possession. It was written by Mr. Crawford to Alfred Balch, Esq., of Nashville, and is dated 14th December, 1827. The movement thus commenced did not terminate with this letter. It was followed by other attacks from the same and other quarters, some of which are indicated in the correspondence. I remained ignorant and unsuspicious of these secret movements against me, until the spring of 1828, when vague rumors reached me; but I treated them with silent neglect, relying confidently for protection on the friendly relations which had so long existed between General Jackson and myself, and the uniform and decided course which I had taken in his favor, in the political struggle then pending."

The publication of this correspondence a few days before the close of the term of the Twenty-first Congress, in March, 1831, was one of the causes which hastened the dissolution of the cabinet immediately afterwards, namely, in April, 1831. From that time there was a complete rupture between the President and Vice President and their respective friends, and Mr. Calhoun and his supporters acted afterwards in opposition to the administration of Gen. Jackson.

In October, 1831, Mr. Calhoun published a reply to some parts of Major Eaton's address to the public. Alluding to the course of Mrs. Calhoun, in refusing to visit Mrs. Eaton, the Vice President remarks, that he told his wife that "he approved of her decision, though," he says, "I foresaw the difficulties in which it would probably involve me; but that I viewed the question involved as paramount to all political considerations, and was prepared to meet the consequences, as to myself, be they what they might. The road to favor and patronage lay directly before me, could I have been base enough to tread it. The intimate relation between General Jackson and Major Eaton was well known, as well as the interest that the former took in Mrs. Eaton's case; but as degraded as I would have felt myself, had I sought favor in that direction, I would not have considered the infamy less had we adopted the course we did from any other motive than a high and a sacred regard to duty. It was not, in fact, a question of the exclusion of one already admitted into society, but the admission of one already excluded. It is equally beyond the scope of power, or influence, to exclude the virtuous and unsuspected female from society, as experience has found it to raise the suspected to that elevation." "General Jackson never consulted me as to the formation of his cabinet. He was even then, as it now appears, alienated from me, by means which have been explained on a former occasion."

The movement on the part of Mr. Van Buren, in promoting and advising a dissolution of the cabinet, proved a judicious and fortunate one for his own interests, and for the future tranquillity of Gen. Jackson in administering the government. He was appointed Minister to England by the President, but recalled, on account of being rejected by the Senate by the casting vote of Vice President Calhoun. This circumstance aided his nomination and election to the Vice Presidency, from whence his transference to the Presidency, by the election of 1836, was easily effected.

As a further measure to insure the prostration of Mr. Calhoun, and ruin his prospects for the Presidency, it was resolved by his opponents, soon after the accession of Gen. Jackson, to induce the latter to consent to a re-election. Accordingly, as early as December, 1829, the New York *Courier and Enquirer*—then a Jackson paper—intimated that the re-election of Gen. Jackson was desirable, and ventured to suggest that Mr. Van Buren might be a candidate, provided he declined. In March, 1830, the same paper said: "We repeat that Gen. Jackson, and he only, will be the candidate of the republican party for the next Presidency." The proprietor of the NEW YORK HERALD, Mr. Bennett, then one of the editors of the *Courier and Enquirer*, was among the earliest political writers, at the time, who urged this course. Gen. Jackson was nominated for re-election by the democratic members of the Pennsylvania Legislature, on the 31st March, 1830, which course was soon followed in New York, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Alabama, and Illinois—all of which nominations took place before the dissolution of the cabinet and the previous publication of Mr. Calhoun's correspondence with Gen. Jackson.

The new cabinet, which was not completely organized until late in the summer of 1831, was constituted as follows:—Edward Livingston, of Louisiana, Secretary of State; Louis McLane, of Delaware, Secretrary of the Treasury; Lewis Cass, of Michigan, Secretary of War; Levi Woodbury, of New Hampshire, Secretary of the Navy; Roger B. Taney, of Maryland, Attorney-General. This cabinet, the members of which were all friendly to Mr. Van Buren, was not only superior to that which preceded it, but might fairly compare with most of those of previous administrations; and its character furnished strong testimony of the tribute paid to public opinion, in the selection of his advisers, by a President of great personal popularity.

During General Jackson's second term there were several changes in the cabinet, as follows:—Mr. Livingston resigned as Secretary of State, on being appointed Minister to France, in 1833; and Louis McLane was transferred to the State Department from that of the Treasury; he resigned in 1834, and John Forsyth, of Georgia, was appointed in his place. William J. Duane, of Pennsylvania, was appointed Secretary of the Treasury, in place of Mr. McLane, in 1833; but in consequence of refusing to remove the public deposits from the United States Bank, he was removed by General Jackson, and Roger B. Taney (Attorney-General) appointed to succeed him; and the Senate, not confirming Mr. Taney, Levi Woodbury was transferred from the Navy to the Treasury Department, in 1834. Mahlon Dickerson, of New Jersey, succeeded Mr. Woodbury in the Navy Department, and Benjamin F. Butler, of New York, was appointed Attorney General in place of Mr. Taney. Amos Kendall was appointed Postmaster General, in place of Mr. Barry, appointed Minister to Spain, in 1835. In these different changes in the cabinet, the utmost harmony was kept up between the President and members, except in the case of Mr. Duane. John H. Eaton was appointed Minister to Spain, by Gen. Jackson, in 1836.

On Mr. Van Buren's accession to the Presidency, he continued in the cabinet Messrs. Forsyth, Woodbury, Dickerson, Kendall and Butler, and appointed Joel R. Poinsett Secretary of War, in place of General Cass, who was sent to France as minister. Great unanimity prevailed in this cabinet; but sundry changes took place after a time, in consequence of resignations, viz: James K. Paulding, of New York, appointed Secretary of the Navy, in place of Mr. Dickerson, in 1838; John M. Niles, of Connecticut, Postmaster General, in place of Mr. Kendall, in 1840; Felix Grundy, of Tennessee, Attorney General, in place of Mr. Butler, in 1838. Mr. Grundy resigned in Jan. 1840, and was succeeded by Henry D. Gilpin of Pennsylvania.

The cabinet appointed by Gen. Harrison, on his accession to the Presidency, in March, 1841, was composed of the following prominent whigs, viz.:—Secretary of State, Daniel Webster, of Mas.; Treasury, Thomas Ewing, of Ohio; War, John Bell, of Tennessee; Navy, George E. Badger, of North Carolina; Postmaster General, Francis Granger, of New York; Attorney General, John J. Crittenden, of Kentucky.

This cabinet was retained in office by John Tyler, when he succeeded to the Presidency, on the death of Harrison, in April, 1841. Although by this act of Mr. Tyler, and the sentiments contained in the address which he issued to the people, the whig party generally felt that the new President would co-operate with the majority of Congress in carrying out the views and desires of those by whom he had been elected, there were some who had long known Mr. Tyler, who thought otherwise. The whigs among this class of observers apprehended that he would carry with him into the Presidency his peculiar notions of a strict construction of the constitution, imbibed in the Virginia school of democracy, involving principles which, if carried out, would prove repugnant to the views of public policy entertained by the whig party, and defeat measures which they deemed necessary to restore the prosperity of the country.

Among the measures considered indispensable by the whigs, on coming into power, in 1841, was the incorporation of a National Bank, and on that subject, it is well known Mr. Tyler and his cabinet came into collision. The NEW YORK HERALD was among the first of the journals which attempted to enlighten the public mind with regard to the real state of the case, and of the political principles of John Tyler. The late Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Kennedy, who was a member of the Congress which passed the bank bills, wrote a small work called "Defence of the Whigs," in which he attributes great influence to the HERALD and its then correspondent at Washington, in consequence of the accuracy of the information obtained, and the policy and views of the executive shadowed forth in our correspondence and editorials.

President Tyler having returned with his vetoes, two successive bills to charter a national bank, which had been passed by Congress, and the whig leaders becoming satisfied that harmony and co-operation with the President were impossible, all the members of the cabinet, with the exception of Mr. Webster, resigned on the 11th of September. It was understood that Mr. Webster remained in the cabinet for the purpose of completing the negotiations with Great Britain, then in progress, respecting the Northeast boundary. He also observed, in a letter dated 13th September, to the editors of the *National Intelligencer*: "Lest any misapprehension should exist as to the reasons which have led me to differ from the course pursued by my late colleagues, I wish to say that I remain, first, because I have seen no sufficient reason for the dissolution of the late cabinet by the voluntary act of its own members. Notwithstanding what has passed, I have confidence that the President will co-operate with the Legislature in overcoming all difficulties," &c.

Mr. Webster remained in the cabinet over two years, and resigned in May, 1843. It was expected by some that the President would select the members of his new cabinet from the ranks of the democratic party, but he promptly made his appointments of the following distinguished whigs and conservatives, viz.:—Walter Forward, of Pennsylvania, Secretary of the Treasury; John McLean, of Ohio, Secretary of War; Abel P. Upshur, of Virginia, Secretary of the Navy; Charles A. Wickliffe, of Kentucky, Postmaster General; Hugh S. Legare, of South Carolina, Attorney General. These nominations were all confirmed by the Senate. Judge McLean declining the office, John C. Spencer, of New York, was appointed to take charge of the War Department. Thus the new cabinet was formed in a more satisfactory manner to the public than had been anticipated by the whigs, while the hopes of the democrats were somewhat dampened.

Various changes took place in the cabinet during the administration of John Tyler, in consequence of deaths and resignations, without having any important influence on the politics of the country. Hugh S. Legare succeeded Mr. Webster as Secretary of State, in May, and died June 20, 1843; Abel P. Upshur succeeded Mr. Legare, and died February 25. 1844; John C. Calhoun was appointed March 6, 1844, and greatly contributed to the annexation of Texas. John C. Spencer was transferred to the Treasury Department on the resignation of Mr. Forward, in March, 1843, and having resigned in June, 1844, was succeeded by George M. Bibb, of Kentucky. James M. Porter, of Pennsylvania, was appointed to succeed Mr. Spencer in the War Department, but being rejected by the Senate, was succeeded by William Wilkins, of the same State. David Henshaw, of Massachusetts, appointed Secretary of the Navy, was rejected by the Senate, and succeeded by Thomas W. Gilmer, who was killed on board the steamer Princeton, as was also Mr. Upshur, on the 25th of February, 1844. He was succeeded by John Y. Mason, of Virginia. John Nelson, of Maryland, succeeded Mr. Legare as Attorney General.

These successive cabinet changes under Tyler had very little influence on Congress or the country; but it is not to be denied that the foreign relations of the United States were ably managed during this administration.

The cabinet appointed by President Polk was composed as follows:—James Buchanan, Secretary of State; Robert J. Walker, Secretary of the Treasury; William L. Marcy, Secretary of War; George Bancroft, Secretary of the Navy; Cave Johnson, Postmaster General; John Y. Mason, Attorney General. This proved a strong cabinet, and managed the affairs of the country and foreign relations, including the Mexican war, with ability. Mr. Bancroft resigned in September, 1846, and was appointed Minister to England. John Y. Mason succeeded him, and Nathan Clifford was appointed Attorney General, and, on being appointed Commissioner to Mexico, was succeeded by Isaac Toucey, of Connecticut, in the cabinet.

Mr. Polk, it is well known, was greatly indebted to the late Silas Wright and his political friends for his election, which depended upon the electoral votes of the State of New York; but their wishes were disregarded in the formation of the cabinet. The President having informed Mr. Van Buren and Mr. Wright that he had come to the conclusion that, either the State or the Treasury Department should be committed to the charge of a citizen of the State of New York; thereupon the ex-President and Governor Wright recommended Benjamin F. Butler for Secretary of State, or A. C. Flagg for Secretary of the Treasury. The President, however, tendered the appointment of Secretary of the Treasury to Governor Wright himself; but he was so situated that, even if he had desired the office, he could not honorably accept it. He had repeatedly pledged himself that, if elected Governor, he would not accept any office under the national government. Mr. Polk then tendered to Mr. Butler the office of Secretary at War, but he declined, as the duties to be performed by that officer would lead him so far from the line of his profession as a lawyer, that the attempt to resume, successfully, its practice, would be utterly hopeless.

About the time of this correspondence, the friends of Mr. Marcy prepared a letter to the President, signed, as was alleged, by a majority of the democratic members of the Legislature, requesting that in case a New Yorker should be called to the cabinet, Mr. Marcy should be selected for that place. This recommendation was successful, and Mr. Marcy was appointed Secretary of War. The particular friends of Governor Wright, (the radicals and barnburners,) regarded this selection with disfavor, and some feeling of resentment. Many of the friends of Mr. Marcy were openly opposed to the re-election of Mr. Wright as Governor, and it was well understood that the election of John Young, the whig candidate, and the defeat of Governor Wright, in 1846, was owing to the votes of hunker friends of Mr. Marcy.

The cabinet appointed by Gen. Taylor, consisting of John M. Clayton, William M. Meredith, George W. Crawford, William B. Preston, Thomas Ewing, Jacob Collamer, and Reverdy Johnson, was considered respectable in point of talent, but proved a failure in practice, in consequence of their unpopular appointments to office, and their administration of affairs generally, without giving satisfaction to either political party. They went out of office on the death of General Taylor, in July 1850, with the odor of unpopularity attached to them, and it was considered the part of wisdom in Mr. Fillmore, when he announced an entirely new cabinet, on his accession to the Presidency. The names were—Daniel Webster, Secretary of State; Thomas Corwin, Secretary of the Treasury; Charles M. Conrad, Secretary of War; William A. Graham, Secretary of the Navy; Alexander H. H. Stuart, Secretary of the Interior; Nathan K. Hall, Postmaster General; John J. Crittenden, Attorney General. The resignations have been, Wm. A. Graham, in whose place John P. Kennedy was appointed Secretary of the Navy, and Mr. Hall, a Postmaster General, was succeeded by Samuel Hubbard. Mr. Webster died in October last, and succeeded as Secretary of State, by Edward Evere

It remains to be seen whether the cabinet r cently appointed by President Pierce, and select from the various sections and interests of the d mocratic party, can hold together for any consider ble length of time. Should the President be ab to carry them with him through his term of offic he will be admitted to possess more tact, conciliato and executive talents, than have been shown by eith of his predecessors in the Presidency.

New Publications.

The public documents which we have received h not numerous, though of an important nature. Th include the report of Mr. David L. Seymour, from th Committee on Commerce, to whom was referred su dry memorials of American citizens relative to re procal trade with the British North American co nies. With the nature of that report, our reade are already aware, as also with the speech of t Hon. S. R. Mallory, of Florida, on the Fisherie The other documents are connected with our ow State affairs. The first in the list is the Tenth A nual Report of the Managers of the State Lunat Asylum; next, the act to provide for the incorpor tion of Fire Insurance Companies; next, the Annu Report of the Canal Appraisers, which possesses p culiar interest at this time; and last, forming an a pendage to the latter, the Annual Report of the Sta Engineer and Surveyor of the Canals of New Yor for the year 1852.

We have also received two society documents, o of which possesses a class interest only, while t other will enlist the attention of all real philanthr pists. We allude to the Twenty-first Annual Repo presented to the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Societ by its Board of Managers, and the account of t transactions of the Central Relief Committee of t Society of Friends, during the famine in Ireland, 1846 and 1847.

Apropos to the subject of death, we will notice valuable work by Dr. Banning, on the Mechanic Pathology and Treatment of Chronic Diseases, pu lished by Messrs. Wilson & Co., of Beekman stre It is well worthy of perusal.

Mr. Ambler, of Broadway, has sent us two lit works on Spiritual Philosophy, which are intende to be followed by larger works. We respectfull direct the attention of the inmates of Utica Asylu to the fact.

In the magazine line we have received the "Unite States Review," "Putnam's Monthly," "Bronson Quarterly Review," "De Bow's Review," and t "Illustrated Magazine of Art," all of which a characteristically excellent.

"Minifie's Mechanical Drawing Book for Self-I struction," continues to exhibit progressive lesson and carries out satisfactorily the excellent plan fir proposed. Another capital work is the "New Syste of Musical Notation for the use of the Blind," by M Mahony, of the New York Institution for the Blin The plan consists in using the regular letters of t alphabet instead of the notes themselves, and well worthy of the attention of the friends of t afflicted.

The poetical works of Gray, with a memoir of t author, an elegant edition, have been sent to us b G. P. Putnam & Co. Henry Carey Baird, of Phil delphia, is the publisher. Since the death of We ster, the demand for Gray's poems has been qui large.

The new "Biblical Atlas and Scriptural Atla with descriptive notices of the Tabernacle and t Temple," has been published in a handsome volu by the American Sunday School Union, 146 Chesn street, Philadelphia. It is a valuable book of refe ence for bible students.

The position which Mrs. Stowe has acquire amongst one class, Miss Catherine Sinclair bids fa to gain in another, by her novel of "Beatrice," pu lished by Dewitt & Davenport. "Uncle Tom" wa essentially a gross exaggeration, entirely unrelieve by those bye plots and plays of fancy which render book interesting, but in "Beatrice" those faults ar avoided. It is a work written in the same spirit a Michelet's "Priests, Women and Families," but e hibits a power and searching criticism which th French writer was not possessed of. When we co sider the noise made in the world by Mrs. Stowe an Miss Sinclair, we cannot help thinking that this i indeed, the "age of women," and will hereafter b catalogued after the "golden age" and the "iro age."

Mr. Peterson, of Philadelphia, has forwarded to u "Clara Moreland," by Emerson Bennett, re-printe from the *Saturday Evening Post*, wherein it a tracted a great deal of notice, and was considere every way worthy of being published in the regula form, and illustrated.

Among the reprints of English works which w have received are, "Fielding's Life of Jonatha Wild," published by Stringer & Townsend, and work entitled, "The Coming Struggle among th Nations of the Earth," published by Mr. John Mo fet. Of the character of the first we need not, c course, speak; and of the second we will merely o serve that it is a sort of prophecy regarding the p litical events of the next fifteen years. Instead, how ever, of auguring from astrology, the author take the Bible for his horoscope.

Corbyn, No. 603 Broadway, has issued his illus trated edition of "La Favorita," by Donizetti. I should be in the hands of all opera goers.

Mr. W. Taylor, of Park place, has sent us Dougla Jerrold's new play of "St. Cupid," and Mr. Cherry drama of the "Soldier's Daughter." Of the first w have already spoken in our theatrical notices, an the second is too well known and appreciated t need criticism.

The Southern Commercial Convention.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., February 1. 1853.

SIR—The Commercial Convention, held at Baltimor in December last, having adjourned to meet at this cit on the first Monday of June next, the citizens of Mem phis have resolved, with great zeal and unanimity, t second the proposition.

The various important subjects discussed at that con vention:—Direct trade with Europe from Baltimore an other Southern cities; the establishment of commercia relations with the valley of the Amazon, the importanc of which has been so ably presented to public considera tion by Lieutenant Maury; the extension and completio of a system of railroads from the Southern Atlanti cities to the Mississippi river; the great project of a rail way from the Mississippi river to the Pacific coast; an other matters of vital consequence to the South an West; will, doubtless, be renewed, with increased inter est, in the discussions of the June convention.

We have been commissioned by our fellow citizens o Memphis to invite you to be present on that interestin occasion, and to participate in the deliberations of th convention.

It is needless for us to remind you that the time ha arrived when a vigorous and united effort, on the part of the South and West, is required for the protection of their interests and the developement of their resources and power.

We have great pleasure in tendering to you, on behalf of our fellow citizens, the hospitalities of the city and assurances of a cordial welcome.

We have the honor to be, with great respect, your obedient servants,

J. P. PRYOR, Chairman.

COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE.

Wm. A. Booth,	Jno. T. Trezevant,	Leon Trousdale,
A. Wright,	H. C. Walker,	F. A. Owen,
John Martin,	D. M. Currin,	James C. Jones,
J. P. Caruthers,	James Sewell,	A. P. Merrill,
Jas. Wickersham,	H. G. Smith,	Wm. R. Harris,
E. M. Yerger,	A. M. Hopkins,	A. S. Caldwell,
James H. Otey,	James L. Penn,	Smith P. Bankhead.
F. P. Stanton,	M. W. Lindsay,	

To the Fair Pharisees of Britain.

Born in that zone where deafening thunders roar,
As fierce traditions of almighty lore,
Where burning whirlwinds start the slothful air,
And desolation reigns supremely bare;
Where lonely palms, a gaunt and scattered band,
As monuments to vegetation stand,
And streamless hollows in the desert rest,
Like undulations of a milkless breast;
Where suns, which bring to other lands delight,
Burn as they beam, and with their splendor blight;
Where nature lies a prostrate feverish form,
With intermittent ravings in the storm—
In scenes like these the colored sons of earth,
Draw their subsistence from their native dearth,
And, lower than the beasts that prowl around,
Like slothful worms they drag along the ground;
Whilst muddy dialect is all that can
Distinguish them as of the species—man.
Reclaimed from sloth and vilest degradation,
They're raised to servants in a foreign nation
Fed, clothed and car'd for, by a master's hand,
And happier far than in their native land;
Strangers to hunger, easier much their task,
Than that of others wearing freedom's mask.
Ye graceful fair ones who deplore their lot—
Ye British mothers on your island spot—
Ye satin Pharisees who love to roam
In search of evils plentiful at home—
Leave to our care the fictious slaves of Stowe,
And to the famished seamstress kindly go:
Inspect the garret where the rushlight burns,
And ask your starving sister what she earns.
Ask of your freeborn fellow-being why
The reddened lid sits heavy on her eye;
Look at her poor white fingers, thin and long,
And think one moment of your poet's song.
Immortal Hood! his lines will tell you where
You should bestow your philanthropic care,
The lines of him you left to starve in life,
Then compromised by pensioning his wife.

B. T. I

THE GRAVE OF PRESIDENT TAYLOR.—A correspondent of the New York *Observer* writes as follows on a subject which ought to be of national interest:—"To reach General Taylor's grave, you must wind through byways, and finally stop before a small enclosure on the top of a hill, in an open field, surrounded by a rude stone wall; and just on the other side of the wall you will see a very plain vault, with a front of limestone rocks, roughly hewn, and an iron door, and that you will be told is the tomb of the once famous General Zachary Taylor, President of the United States of America. No monument has been erected to his memory!—his name has not even been inscribed on his vault!! In the centre of the small graveyard there is a monument erected to the memory of his father, Col. Richard Taylor, a revolutionary soldier."